

THE GULL

Golden Gate Audubon Society Berkeley, California Volume 75 Number 9 October 1993



TO CATCH A MOCKINGBIRD: BIRD MONITORING IN THE SIERRA NEVADA

Jim Steele has yet to catch his first mockingbird, but he has caught over 50 other species of songbirds in his mist nets. Jim will discuss his multi-year bird monitoring project in the Sierra Nevada on Thursday, October 14, at 7:30 p.m., at the Josephine Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way in San Francisco. Members of GGAS and non-members are invited to our monthly program. A map to Josephine Randall Museum is on page 142.

Ornithologists mist-net birds to understand their movements, to learn how many young are being produced, and how well birds are surviving their winter "vacation" in the tropics. Jim will share what he has learned about the comings and goings of breeding birds from mist-netting stations that he monitors along an elevational transect across the Sierra Nevada. At his five diverse study sites that range from conifer forests to mountain meadows to the crest of the Yuba Pass,

(continued on next page)

ON SAFARI IN KENYA, 1994

Join Alan Hopkins, GGAS Board member, field trip leader and bird photographer, on a 17-day safari in Kenya next summer. Alan will be joined by an experienced guide from Park East Tours and together they will tour some of the premier birding and wildlife viewing areas of Kenya. Our itinerary goes far beyond the usual tourists haunts and is designed to cover a wide range of habitats: savannah, coastal woodland, beach, mangrove swamps, fresh water swamps, dry woodland, mountain forest and lake. We can expect to see 300 to 400 species of birds on our safari. In some of the areas we'll visit we may see 100 species in a single morning! What makes viewing especially exciting is

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SEED FOR SALE — AN ONGOING SUPPLY

Our fall seed sale was very early so we've ordered plenty of extra seed of every variety to keep in stock. If you missed our deadline or run low, give us a call and arrange to pick up more.

MOCKINGBIRD (continued)

he captures, bands, takes measurements, releases and hopefully recaptures his subjects. He is studying where juveniles go after they literally "fly the coop," and is attempting to locate important upslope staging areas where birds congregate and feed before their long migration south. You may learn about some good birding hot spots, and about how you can volunteer as a field assistant for some hands-on, important work with birds.

Jim's enthusiasm for studying birds, which began with his first childhood attempt to trap birds using a box, string and bread crumbs, is infectious. His

techniques are now a bit more sophisticated, after having received a Master's Degree in Biology and Ecology. Jim Steele has been the director of San Francisco State University's Sierra Nevada Field Camp for 9 years and is also an 8th grade science teacher. The Sierra Nevada Field Camp engages in environmental education and research.

—JOELLE BUFFA

OCTOBER CALENDAR

- 4—SF Conservation Committee
Call office for location
- 14—General Meeting: **To Catch a Mockingbird: Bird Monitoring in the Sierra Nevada**, 7:30 p.m., Josephine Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, SF
- 18—East Bay Conservation Committee, GGAS Office, 7:30 p.m.
- 25—Board of Directors
GGAS Office, 7:30 p.m.

* * * * *

Mark your calendars for **Wednesday**, November 10, when the General Meeting will feature Claire Nelson from Earthwatch at Northbrae Community Church in Berkeley at 7:30 p.m.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$20 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 15, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.

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MAP & DIRECTIONS

FROM THE EAST: West on 14th St., across Market, until 14th St. veers left and becomes Roosevelt Wy. Continue one quarter mile, Museum Wy. is on the left.

FROM THE NORTH: South on Masonic, across the Panhandle, up and over the hill where Masonic merges with Roosevelt Wy. One block ahead on the right is Museum Wy.

FROM THE WEST AND SOUTH: Take Portola to upper Market, head downhill, turn left at the signal at Clayton St. Go uphill on Clayton, turn right at the 2nd signal (17th St.) then make the first left onto Roosevelt Wy. Museum Wy. is one quarter mile on the right.

THE PASSED TORCH

Audubon is first and foremost a conservation organization, dedicated to preserving and maintaining what is best in this world of ours. For eleven years and three months we managed to hold fast to our newsletter editor, Don Sanford, but like a mighty river, he has finally decided to move on downstream and there isn't a dam we could build that would hold him in place. Leaving me to fill the void.

Don has always been the reasoned voice in the midst of the wild cacophony and as a result we listened to his ideas. He didn't shout nor did he run to verbosity and inflammatory superlatives; *The GULL* bears the stamp of his even-handed approach. I'll do my best to continue his tradition although I can't promise always to be so reasoned or reasonable. It continues to confound me that he made a hard job look so effortless, and you will forgive me, I hope, if I founder on occasion.

And, in the meantime, although Don is past tense for *The GULL*, he is still very much a part of Golden Gate Audubon, fortunately for all of us.

—ANN DEWART, Editor

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, October 9—Coyote Hills Regional Park. Leader: Peter Allen (415) 892-8063.

Sunday, October 10—Point Reyes National Seashore. Leader: Lina Prairie (510) 549-3187.

Wednesday, October 13—Mini-trip to East Bay shoreline. Leaders: Wilcox (510) 351-9301 & Spoelman.

For details on the above see *The GULL* for September.

Saturday, October 16—Sixth Annual Point Reyes National Seashore All-day Fall Birding Blitz. (Non-competitive joint activity: GGAS and

National Park Service.) Meet at 8 a.m. at Five Brooks Trailhead parking lot (about 3.5 miles south of Olema on Hwy. 1). We will bird Five Brooks Pond area, Limantour Spit, Drakes Beach, Chimney Rock and Point Reyes, ending at Bear Valley for a multi-habitat trip. Last year's "Blitz" produced 97 species. This year we'll try to top 100.

Bring food, water, and layer clothes for variable weather. Leader: Leon Abrams (415) 453-9980 (work), (510) 843-4107, (home). (✓)

Sunday, October 17—Alameda and San Leandro Shoreline. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in Alameda at Broadway and Shoreline Dr. We will bird the Elsie B. Roemer Sanctuary. Shorebirds should be present in numbers, so bring a spotting scope if you have one. Bring lunch and liquids. The afternoon will be spent visiting interesting and less frequented shorebird hot spots. Leader: Leora Feeney (510) 522-8525. (✓)

Sunday, October 24—Tennessee Valley. Meet at 9 a.m. and bring lunch. Take Hwy 101 north across the Golden Gate Bridge and take the Mill Valley exit under the Richardson Bay Bridge. In one-half mile turn left at the Tennessee Valley sign and drive to the end of the road. We will walk on a level trail looking for land and sea birds. Rain cancels trip. Leader: Betty Short (415) 921-3020 during working hours. (✓)

Saturday, November 6—Birds of Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Meet at 8 a.m. at the front gate of the arboretum (near Ninth Ave. and Lincoln Way). We will look for birds in the various habitats of the arboretum, including Red-shouldered Hawks, Red-breasted Sapsuckers, and White-throated Sparrows. Beginners (and all others) welcome. Leader: Alan Ridley (415) 566-3241.

Wednesday, November 10—Mini-trip to Aquatic Park, Berkeley, and

other nearby areas. Meet at 9:30 a.m. in the northwest corner of Spenger's Restaurant parking lot (4th St.) to carpool. We should see returning shorebirds and migratory ducks. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510/351-9301) and Jeanmarie Spoelman.

Plan Ahead:

(As of press time the annual November trip to the Sacramento Valley Wildlife Refuges, and the traditional Thanksgiving Day trip to Point Reyes have been cancelled due to unavailable leaders. Any volunteers out there?)

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓). See below.

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (510) 524-2399, or GGAS office: (510) 843-2222.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

Christmas is coming! For many birders, high points of the season are the GGAS Christmas Bird Counts. These days in the field present wonderful opportunities to see plenty of birds, meet some delightful people and, just incidently, collect and contribute valuable information on what we know about Bay Area birds. This year the Oakland CBC will be held on Sunday, December 19, 1993; the San Francisco CBC will be held on Tuesday, December 28. Information and sign-up forms will be mailed to recent participants during the first week of November. To have your name added to the CBC mailing list, call the GGAS office at (510) 843-2222.

—KAY LOUGHMAN
Compiler, Oakland CBC

AUGUST OBSERVATIONS

The excitement over the last six weeks has been largely marine related. In Monterey Bay, a large krill "bloom," nutrient-rich, cold water upwellings of euphausiid shrimp and microscopic plant life, was banquet fare for up to two hundred blue and humpback whales during the last two weeks of August. At the same time, seabird migration provided some back-thumping, heart-stopping excitement as well as a few awed, dumbstruck moments. During a single weekend, August 28-29, Monterey Bay pelagic trips counted as many as 1000 Pink-footed, 400 Buller's, one Flesh-footed, two Short-tailed, and two Black-vented Shearwaters along with tens of thousands Sooty's. There were also two Least Storm-Petrels; 6000 Red-necked and 2000 Red Phalaropes; ninety Pomarine and **twenty-six Long-tailed Jaegers**; 300 Sabine's Gulls, 2500 Arctic Terns and four Craveri's Murrelets (DLSh). The jumping-up-and-down back-slapper that weekend was a small, fast-flying, black-and-white shearwater (DLSh) that was well-seen and photographed, but whose exact identity is still being debated. The initial ID was Townsend's Shearwater which breeds in the Revilla Gigedo Islands off the west coast of central Mexico, but photos confirmed that the bird had white undertail coverts which eliminated Townsend's but raised the possibility of Newell's, the Hawaiian sub-species of Townsend's. Also possible would be Manx Shearwater, a transequatorial Atlantic migrant which shows up in Australia and which has been recorded off the coast of Washington in recent memory. On August 31, a Newell's-type shearwater was studied from the shore of SE Farallon Island by researchers familiar with the species (PRBO). And on September 5, another of these

enigmas, quite likely a different individual than was seen the week before, was photographed and videotaped amongst the Sooty Shearwaters on Monterey Bay (DLSh). The photographs are going forth to the experts and opinions will be rendered in good time, but meanwhile, it's evident that seabird identification is often not self-evident.

Other noteworthy sightings from Monterey Bay include a Fleshfooted Shearwater on August 7; a **Red-billed Tropicbird** on July 25, and South Polar Skuas on July 25 and August 8 (DLSh). The adult female **Brown Booby**, first seen last year, returned to SE Farallon on August 17 and was still present at the end of the month (PRBO, SGI). And a **Magnificent Frigatebird** was flying south along the San Mateo coast on July 25 (BS fide RSTh).

Every fall, a good portion of the world's population of Sooty Shearwaters travels south past our coast as part of a figure-eight circumnavigation of the Pacific during the austral winter. They are easily seen from shore starting in late July and continuing into early September, generally flying by in a steady stream. Where food is abundant, they will gather into huge feeding and roosting flocks that are a wonder to behold. This year up to 300,000 individuals could be seen just off of Aptos late each afternoon, literally blackening the sky and the water as they fed frenziedly and then settled down for the night. Even the sound effects, whirring wings and splashing water but no vocalization, were eerily awesome.

A trip to the Cordell Bank, two hundred miles northwest of Monterey Bay, on August 21 produced some thrills of its own. **Flocks** of small, pale birds that at first glance looked like Red-necked Phalaropes turned out to be Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels, about two hundred total.

This is generally a species where two together is considered a crowd. The trip also had thirty-five Black-footed Albatross, four Wilson's Storm-Petrels and a Xantus' Murrelet (RS).

Sometimes one begins to have strange thoughts about the Sacramento Valley: a couple of years ago a Laysan Albatross appeared on Lake Shasta, an out-of-the-way location even for a bird that occasionally hitches a ride on ships; on August 11, a **Streaked Shearwater**, generally at home in ocean waters off Japan, was picked up in a Lucky's parking lot in Red Bluff, rehabilitated and later released (BY).

A Least Bittern was sighted at the Salinas River mouth on August 29 (JBo, TEa) and at least four Little Blue Herons were reported from Alviso (mob) and one from Newark (EHa). A Green-backed Heron is not expected on outer Point Reyes making one at Drake's Beach on August 9 noteworthy (RS). Of interest to breeding bird atlasers in San Francisco were nesting Pelagic Cormorants and Black-crowned Night-Herons on Yerba Buena Island (ES).

A single Brant at Crowley Lake on July 20 and two more at Mono Lake on August 21 along with a Common Tern add to only a few previous Mono County records for these species (PJM). There was a Harlequin Duck at Point Reyes from August 15 to 18 (LLu, CiL). At the mouth of Pescadero Creek the Oldsquaw continued to be seen through July 27 (mob) and a female Common Meganser with ten youngsters is only the second nesting record for the county (mob).

Throughout the region, shorebirds returned in comforting numbers; totals included: twenty-four Lesser Golden-Plovers, including seven adults of the race *dominica* (soon to be American Golden Plover) at Lawson's Landing on

Tomales Bay (RS); one hundred seventy-six Lesser Yellowlegs; eight Solitary Sandpipers including five in Mono County on August 22 (PJM); thirty-three Semipalmated Sandpipers; sixty-four Baird's Sandpipers; ten Pectoral Sandpipers; a Buff-breasted Sandpiper at the Salinas River mouth on August 29 (JBo, TEa); and four Ruffs, one each in Santa Clara (SMI, MJM), San Mateo (LiC fide RSTh), Monterey (JBo, TEa) and Kings (KR fide BB) counties. A lovely, fresh-plumaged, juvenile **Hudsonian Godwit** at Point Reyes on August 8 and 9 was the first record for Marin County (RS); migrating through the center of the country, this bird is exceedingly rare on the west coast. Likelier to be seen, but not much, is **Bar-tailed Godwit** which breeds in western Alaska and winters in eastern Asia and Australia; one was described from Point Reyes on August 12 (PDeL).

A Costa's Hummingbird in Lee Vin-ing on July 22 was the first Mono County record for the species (PJM). Small numbers of Willow Flycatchers were reported migrating through in August; Eastern Kingbirds were sighted in El Granada on the 23rd (BS fide RSTh) and Hayward on the 26th (RJR); and Purple Martins seemed to be present in greater numbers than in recent years during migration.

Two Red-eyed Vireos were reported, one at Bodega Bay on August 21 and 22 (LSf, LPe) and one at Point Reyes on August 31 (DSg). Warblers included a Northern Parula at Pescadero (RSTh); Blackpoll at Point Reyes (JWe); Black-and-White at San Gregorio (RSTh); five American Redstarts, two in Marin (SRo, DSg), two in San Mateo (RSTh, BS fide RSTh), and one in San Francisco (ASH); Northern Waterthrush in

San Francisco (ASH); and Hooded Warbler at Bodega Bay (DHo, SBT).

There were two Indigo Buntings in Davis at the end of July (StH), a Bobolink at Point Reyes on August 21 (CiL), a Yellow-headed Blackbird at the Salinas River mouth on August 9 (fide RC) and a Lark Bunting at Point Reyes on August 28. Two **Common Grackles** were reported from the Modoc NWR August 23 to 25 (RLR fide BED, BED). And Red Crossbills passed through in small to moderate numbers.

Apologies to Art Edwards whose sighting of a late Ferruginous Hawk was mis-attributed last month.

OBSERVERS: BirdBox, Jim Booker, Rita Caratello, Lisa Carp, Pierre DeLastre, Bruce Duell, Todd Easterla, Steve Glover, Steve Hampton, Keith Hansen, Ed Hase, David Hofmann, Alan S. Hopkins, Cin-ty Lee, Leslie Lieurance, Michael J. Mammoser, Peter J. Metropulos, Steve Mlodinow, Linda Petrulias, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Peter Pyle, Kurt Rademaker, Robert J. Richmond, Steve Rotterborn, Ronnie L. Ryno, Barry Sauppe, Debra Love Shearwater, Dan Singer, Lynn Stafford, Rich Stallcup, Emilie Strauss, Scott B. Terrill, Ron S. Thorn, John Westlake, David G. Yee, Bob Yutzy. Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Rare Bird Alert.

—ANN DEWART



EVENTS OF INTEREST

Frans Lanting in Palo Alto

World-known photographer and naturalist Frans Lanting will present a slide lecture on the Okavango Delta, the largest inland delta in the world, covering 8,500 square miles on the edge of the Kalahari Desert. The program, sponsored by Santa Clara Valley Audubon, takes place Wednesday, October 13, at Lucie Stern Community Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance from SCVAS, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014, (408) 252-3747; or \$12.50 at the door.

Mount Diablo Activities

The Mount Diablo Interpretive Association sponsors a series of "Autumn on the Mountain" events most weekends throughout the fall. Highlights include symposia on California's Endangered Species and The Mt. Diablo Biodiversity Restoration Project on October 2; and the grand opening and dedication of the new Visitor Center/Museum at the Summit on October 16. For further information and a schedule of activities, call Keith Patterson at (510) 685-2175 or Sharyn Fernandez at (510) 687-2548.

Birds of a Feather at the California Academy of Sciences

This new exhibit which opened in June and runs until January 2, 1994, at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, examines the world of flight and feathers and features restored dioramas, eggs and nests, colorful graphics, hands-on displays and a sound gallery, all of which will "immerse visitors in the incredible 'secret life' of birds." The Academy is open daily from 10 to 5. There is an admission charge. Call (415) 750-7145 for further information.

Festival of the Cranes

The Bosque del Apache Festival of the Cranes takes place November 18-21 near the wintering grounds of tens of thousands of Sandhill Cranes and Snow Geese at Socorro, New Mexico. The event features well-known speakers, more than fifty exhibits, workshops, demonstrations and conducted tours, some in areas usually closed to the public. Information and tickets are available from: Festival of the Cranes, P.O. Box 743 NR, Socorro, NM 87801, (505) 835-0424.

KENYA SAFARI

(continued from page 141)

that African birds are among the most colorful and easily identified birds in the world—making Kenya a bird watcher's paradise!

We plan to go in July or August of 1994 which is the ideal time of year. We have excellent chances of catching the wildebeest migration in the Masai Mara, and the rains are over so birds and animals concentrate around sources of water making them easy to spot. It is also the coolest time of year in Kenya. Areas in Kenya to be visited include the North and South Coast, Tsavo, Amboseli, Samburu, the Aberderes, Lake Naivasha, the Masai Mara and Nairobi. We would like to have your input on which dates within this time period would be best for you. To get more information, and let us know your preferences, please call Alan Hopkins at (415) 664-0983; or Marcia or Tasha at Park East Tours: 1-800-223-6078.

Total cost is \$4,100.00 which includes round-trip air-fare from San Francisco. A percentage of each person's costs will go to support Golden Gate Audubon's conservation and education programs. Please join us on this exciting adventure.

PALACE OF FINE ARTS LAGOON PROJECT: VOLUNTEER SEARCH

Volunteer birders are needed for a new project, jointly sponsored by the Exploratorium and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, which seeks to improve the environment of the Palace of Fine Arts lagoon for all wildlife by re-vegetating the perimeter and improving water quality. Exploratorium artist-in-residence Laurie Lundquist is researching the role of wetland plants in water quality control and is creating a natural filtration system which will run in a loop between the lagoon and the inside of the museum.

The Rec. and Park Dept. hopes to implement the results of the research by replanting for improved habitat and water uses. Part of the vital preliminary research is formation of a birdwatch group to identify and count birds, monitor their health and identify nesting sites. The organizers would very much like to have Audubon members involved as an integral part of this project.

In addition, GGAS members are invited to share information about nesting and perching sites and birdlife in general with site gardeners and park section supervisor at Lafayette and Alta Plaza Parks.

If interested in either or both of these projects, contact Gloria Koch-Gonzalez at (415) 292-2012.

ORINDA OPEN SPACE VOTE

Orinda voters have four ballot measures related to land use of Gateway Valley to vote on come November 2. Two represent referendums mounted by the Save Open Space group to overturn the Council's approval of a massive development in the 1,000-acre valley. One of many considerations which caused the referendum was the dramatic effect such development would have on wildlife in the Valley, which is Orinda's last large parcel of unbuilt land.

The Council added two more choices, one an "open space" measure, asking Orinda voters if they wished to purchase the land at a substantial tax increase, and another soliciting opinions on possibly retaining the A2 zoning in place when the developer bought the property.

Open space advocates feel strongly that the "open space" measure crafted by three council members is merely an attempt to make the voters believe Orinda must buy the land if they don't approve the development. This is untrue; Orinda does not have to purchase the land.

Measure Number 4, which would allow up to 195 houses in the Valley, contains no plan at all and might spread houses throughout the Valley, thus destroying and disrupting habitat and vital wildlife corridors. The forage area for the Golden Eagles that have nested for many years in Sibley Park overlooking the Valley would be destroyed.

We urge voters to look carefully at these new, council-added ballot measures.



NEW LEGISLATION AND THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION THREATEN WETLANDS

To wetland lover's deep despair the Clinton Administration has come out with a strikingly bad wetlands proposal.

The Chair (Max Baucus) and ranking member (John Chafee) of the Senate Committee in charge of the Clean Water Act Reauthorization have written a wetlands bill that is unfortunately very similar to the Clinton proposal. (Actually the Senate bill was made public first.)

The key element of both of these proposals is the weakening of wetlands protection. (See chart).

We believe that if these proposals are implemented, there will be a significant loss of existing wetlands.

The proposals would have us believe that such losses would be offset by the creation of new or the restoration of degraded wetlands.

This is not a good deal. Man has shown himself to be fairly inept at creating or restoring wetlands. We simply do not have the knowledge or ability to create restored wetlands that have all the values of natural wetlands.

The National Research Council, the research arm of the National Academy of Sciences, has in fact, stated that, "It has not been shown that restored wetlands maintain regional biodiversity and recreate functional ecosystems." (*Restoration of Aquatic Ecosystems*, National Academy Press, 1992). The Research Council also stated that wetland restoration should not be used to mitigate, i.e. excuse, wetland destruction.

If passed into law, the impacts of these proposals may be devastating on Bay Area wetlands.

Senator Barbara Boxer and Congressman Don Edwards have introduced sound wetlands legislation (the "Wetlands Reform Act of 1993," Senate bill S.1195 and House bill HR 350) that will help preserve wetlands while responding to the complaints of farmers and other wetlands owners.

Please write to:

President Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 25000

and tell him that his plan will harm the wetlands of the Bay Area and imperil our wetlands-dependent endangered species. It will deprive our communities of the flood control and water quality benefits associated with wetlands. He should revise his wetlands program so that it conforms with the Boxer/Edwards "Wetlands Reform Act of 1993."

We also urge you to write Senator Dianne Feinstein and ask her to preserve California's remaining wetlands by endorsing Senator Boxer's bill, S 1195. Tell her that she must *not* sign on to the Baucus/Chafee bill, S. 1304. Her address is:

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Thank you for your help. This is truly one of the greatest threats our wetlands have faced. Please write.

—ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

A COMPARISON OF THE BOXER "WETLANDS REFORM ACT OF 1993", S 1195 AND THE BAUCUS/CHAFEE (S.1304) / CLINTON ADMINISTRATION WETLANDS PLANS

SUBJECT	BOXER, S. 1195	CLINTON-BAUCUS/ CHAFEE, S. 1304
1) PROTECTING EXISTING WETLANDS	Includes strong mandate to protect existing wetlands and other provisions to help achieve this policy.	Weakens protection of existing wetlands,
2) ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS—from decisions of Corps of Engineers to designate or fill wetlands.	No provision.	Administration: Developer <i>only</i> may appeal. Baucus/Chafee: Developer for permit or any person who participated in public comment process may appeal.
3) MITIGATION— The creation or restoration of wetlands in order to offset wetlands impacts.	Maintains current regulatory goal that all wetlands "will be accorded the full measure of protection . . . including appropriate and practicable mitigation."	Abandons concept of mitigating for every wetland loss. Would allow the prevervation of <i>existing</i> wetlands as mitigation for the loss of wetlands. This will result in a "net loss" of wetlands.
4) SEQUENCING— Current regulation requires that before development in a wetland is approved; 1) it must first be shown that there is no practicable alternative site for the project ("avoidance"); 2) wetland impacts must then be minimized if there is no alternate site; 3) all wetlands impacts must be mitigated.	Codifies the current requirement that impacts to wetlands be avoided if possible.	Weakens the key concept in wetlands protection, the requirement for "avoidance." In some cases entirely abandons the sequencing requirements for wetlands.
5. MITIGATION BANKS—The creation or restoration of wetlands for the express purpose of providing compensatory mitigation. Allows mitigation wetlands to be located anywhere within, or even outside, a watershed.	No change from current law.	Allows for the loss of valuable wetlands in exchange for creation of wetlands of questionable health, located where they will not provide the same flood control, water quality and wildlife habitat benefits as the destroyed wetlands.

SUBJECT	BOXER, S. 1195	CLINTON-BAUCUS/ CHAFEE, S. 1304
6) CATEGORIZATION The ranking of wetlands into categories of "highly functional," "limited function," etc.	No provision. Continues current requirement of sequencing for all wetlands.	Under "watershed plans" will allow for the loss of "low value" wetlands without sequencing or specific mitigation.
7) EXEMPTION for wetlands converted to farmland prior to 1985	No specific provision. Improves existing farmers' exemptions from regulation <i>but only for ongoing farming operations.</i>	Would exempt 53,000,000 acres of farmed wetlands from all regulation, and permit conversion to shopping centers, housing tracts and other development.
8) GENERAL PERMITS —Gives permit approval, without individual review, to classes of activities that are said to have minimal environmental impact, e.g. allowing small fills.	Would require the Corps to study the impacts of these permits and to revise the permits if the study shows significant wetlands losses. California has already lost over 700 acres in five years through this permit process.	Would establish state and local General Permits for "Watershed Plans" that may allow for the filling of wetlands without individual review or mitigation.
9) DELEGATION of federal regulatory authority to state, regional and local agencies through "general permits."	No specific provision, but restrict use of general permits under which this delegation would be accomplished. Assures strong federal monitoring and ability to revoke general permits.	Specifically encourages and authorizes delegation of federal regulatory authority to state, regional or local agency. Does not assure adequate monitoring or ability to revoke general permits.
10) FIRM TIME LIMITS within which federal agencies must make decisions on permit applications.	Does not provide deadlines, but establishes a fast track which assures priority availability of Army Corps staff for processing minor permits.	Would establish deadlines within which decisions on permit applications must be made without providing flexibility even for large projects or when agency is short of staff because of underfunding.



BACK YARD BIRDER

Here they come! Here come the shorebirds or "waders" which winter in our area. We see most of them in their winter outer-wear, which is pretty drab compared to their splashy courting outfits. Since they hang around together in large numbers we need some way to sort through all those waders. In their winter plumage, leg color, bill size and shape as well as body shape and length are our best clues. Every year at this time I have to review the most commonly-seen birds. I have a handy list given me by a friend. It arranges shorebirds according to size in descending order. If you can get the size of just one of them in your head, you will have that bird with which to compare the others. The size in inches is from bill tip to tail tip and is the average size.

Long-Billed Curlew—23" Decurved bill; brown with cinnamon under wings seen during flight.

Marbled Godwit—18" Long pinkish bill with black tip, slightly uptilted (toward God!); cinnamon-brown back.

American Avocet—18" Up-swept bill; gray legs; black and white in winter—no rusty breast until breeding season, which also we see.

Whimbrel—17½" De-curved bill; grayish brown on back; whitish and streaked below; striped crown. Flocks fly in a line.

Willet—15" Straight bill; plain, gray bird which becomes dashing in flight with bold black and white wing pattern.

Greater Yellowlegs—14" Bill long, slightly upturned, paler at base; yellow to red-orange legs; sides and belly spotted and barred. Look for white

triangle on rump in flight. Walks with head bobbing.

Black-Necked Stilt—14" Straight, black bill; black back, white underparts; long red or pink legs.

Long-Billed Dowitcher—11½" and **Short-Billed Dowitcher—11"** Both birds are snipe-like with very long, thin bills (with the short-billed being somewhat shorter—obviously); grayish backs; dark caps. Providing they speak up, you might be able to distinguish between these two—Shorty gives a staccato "tu-tu-tu" while Longy utters a single thin "keek." While feeding they probe the shore with an up and down sewing machine movement.

Lesser Yellowlegs—10½" Uncommon and much smaller than its cousin, the Greater Yellowlegs.

Red Knot—10½" Moderately short bill; a chunky bird with short legs.

Ruddy Turnstone—9½" Short black bill; orange legs; slate gray with white mottling on "bib." Turns over stones while feeding. (Surprise!)

Dunlin—8½" Dark bill with slight downward droop; dark legs; chest gray, belly white.

Sanderling—8" Black bill and legs; palest sandpiper in winter; pale gray, white below.

Spotted Sandpiper—7½" Dark bill; olive-brown above, white below; white line over eye. Teeters up and down; found near lakes and ponds and at seashores.

Western Sandpiper—6" Good-sized bill with noticeable droop at tip; black legs.

Least Sandpiper—6" Smaller bill than Western; a browner bird with yellow legs.

Birders have adopted the hunters' term "peeps" to encompass the smallest and most often confused species of sandpipers: Semipalmated, Western, Least, White-rumped, Baird's and Rufous-necked. Their high-pitched calls engendered the name "peep."

To further confuse you, there are plovers to consider. Once you fix the plump body of a plover in your mind, it will be a snap for you to separate them from sandpipers. Here are the most common:

Black-bellied Plover—11" Thick, black pigeon-like bill; gray with mottled back; barred tail. In flight upper tail is white.

Pacific Golden Plover (formerly Lesser Golden-Plover)—**10½"** Similar but slimmer and much browner than above.

Killdeer—10½" Double black breastbands; orangish rump seen when flying. Noisy calls.

Semipalmated Plover—7¼" Single black breastband or "bib"; yellow legs.

Snowy Plover—6¼" Very thin, black bill; very pale with dark legs.

I hope these guidelines will help you on your winter outings. Try Alameda South Shore or Doolittle Pond near the Oakland Airport, especially the south end. We saw wonderful mixed flocks of enormous numbers in January. When startled by the sight of a Northern Harrier they wheeled skyward, screeching in terror. It was unforgettable. Good luck in zeroing in on these look-alikes; then you can pick out those rare birds which are always hoping for anonymity in a crowd.

—MEG PAULETICH

BIRD CLASS IN SAN FRANCISCO

**Window on the Pacific Flyway:
San Francisco Bay, It's Birds
And their Identification**

Instructor: Dan Murphy

Classes: Tuesdays, October 26, November 2 and 9, 7-9 p.m.

Field Trips: Saturdays, October 30 and November 6, 8-11 a.m.

This California Academy of Sciences class will focus primarily on the field identification of birds which winter on San Francisco Bay. Slides and some skins will be used to help beginning and intermediate birders identify and enjoy the marvelous diversity of the Bay's avifauna. Field trips are planned for Foster City and the Las Gallinas Sewage Ponds.

Registration: \$65 for Audubon and Academy members, \$75 for non-members. To register include a check, a self-addressed stamped envelope, and a note indicating the name of the class and the fact you are an Audubon member to: Adult Education Office, California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118-4599. For more information please call (415) 750-7100.

DO WE HAVE A JOB FOR YOU!

Looking for meaningful and exciting volunteer activities? Have you been looking for ways to help save our wildlife and have some extra hours you can spend in doing so? Well, we have just the answer for you.

Over the years, The Golden Gate Audubon Society has greatly expanded its scope of activities. We've greatly increased our educational efforts

(bringing *Audubon Adventures* to 90 classrooms).

We've begun an ambitious breeding bird atlas for Alameda County that will help define the state of our environment.

We continue to work towards the protection of our environment, testifying at agency hearings, organizing chapter responses on crucial issues through action alerts and other efforts and through a litigation component that has, to date, saved the Oakland Airport wetlands and the Distribution Center wetlands. We are the lead plaintiff, with over 10 other environmental groups as co-plaintiffs, in several lawsuits aimed at increasing fresh-water flows into the Bay and Delta. Victories in these lawsuits will save thousands of acres of freshwater wetlands from turning into salt marsh and will help save many plant, fish and avian species from extinction or significant population declines.

We continue to put on interesting programs, offer over 75 field trips a year and hold three seed sales a year.

All these activities are fun and rewarding but they take time and effort. We have only one part-time staff person and that simply isn't enough for all the tasks that need to be done.

In this issue of *The GULL* you will find a volunteer response form. Please fill it out and join us in our efforts. Help answer the phone in the office (the calls are interesting, the people fascinating) and with other office work. Help with the Breeding Bird Atlas effort or the seed sale. There's lots to do, and it's all rewarding. Good for the soul and the spirit. Let's hear from you soon. Thanks.

—ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY offers many opportunities to meet fellow members and supporters and to advance the Audubon Cause. Make time to take part in the affairs of your society. Here are a few examples for which you might volunteer:

- () Birdseed Sales
- () Weekend Greeter at
Audubon Canyon Ranch
- () Help in the office: 3 hours
per week or so
- () Monthly meeting greeter
() SF () Berkeley
- () Christmas Count
- () April Birdathon
- () Letter writing
- () Helping at GGAS booth at
special events
- () Help in a pinch: volunteer pool
- () Data entry in office computer
- () Help with food for special
events
- () Fundraising
- () Illustrations for *The GULL*
- () Articles for *The GULL*

If you could help, please check items of interest and return this form to GGAS. We will use this information only to follow up on your offer of help.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____

Comments are invited, please use a separate sheet of paper. If you have questions call the office, 510-843-2222.

A GIFT THAT BRINGS EDUCATION AND JOY TO OUR CHILDREN

In the last *GULL* we briefly mentioned the Audubon Adventures program that brings 6 issues of a wonderful (teachers rave about it) environmental newsletter from National Audubon to each child in a classroom, and an in-depth teaching guide for the teacher.

What we neglected to say, as we were reminded by an alert member, is how you can support this program.

What it takes is \$30 per class. Send a check to us, made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society. Memo it for Audubon Adventures or enclose a cover letter indicating the check is for Audubon Adventures. We then find classes interested in the program and send National Audubon money for those classes.

If you have a particular class you wish to sponsor, send us the check with the name of the teacher, the school's name and address, and the class grade. That's all it takes.

We are sponsoring over 90 classes this year, at a cost of over \$2700 so we do need financial support for this program.

If any of you work in, or know of, a company you think may be interested in helping to fund this program, let us know. Many corporations have a charitable gifts department for just such a purpose. Thanks for your support.

AUDUBON ADVENTURES



GGAS WELCOMES BEQUESTS

The Golden Gate Audubon Society is honored that it has been remembered by many of its members and by community philanthropists in their estate planning during this, and past years.

Tax-deductible "planned giving" contributions make possible our continuing efforts to preserve Bay Area wildlife and allow you the opportunity to give a gift larger than what may be currently possible.

Such bequests allow your actions to influence the future. As GGAS approaches its 76th anniversary we can take pride in being one of the most enduring, and effective, of all Bay Area environmental organizations and one of the few devoted solely to preserving our shorebirds and songbirds, and all the other wildlife found in the Bay Area.

To leave a bequest, simply add a paragraph to your will stating: "*I bequeath to Golden Gate Audubon Society the sum of _____ Dollars* [or, if insurance policies, land or other property, please specify]."

For more information on how to leave a bequest to GGAS please call our President, Steve Margolin at 415-434-4262, extension 6005, or write to our office at 2530 San Pablo Ave., Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All information will be held in strict confidence.



BID FOR GILROY ROBERTS BIRD MEDALS

We are pleased to announce an auction of ten sets of Gilroy Roberts Bird medals. Each set consists of five Sterling silver medals, issued as a limited edition in 1976 by the Franklin Mint. A very generous member of Golden Gate Audubon donated these valuable medals and recommended that we offer them at auction through *The GULL* to raise funds for our birding, education and conservation efforts.

Each individual medal depicts a different bird: Pileated Woodpeckers, Avocets, Black Skimmers, Nightingales, Bald Eagles (Set 1); Mourning Dove, Scissor-Tailed Flycatcher, Cardinal, Swallow-tailed Kite, American Egret (Set 2), Goshawk, Skylark, European Robin, Albatross, Woodcock (Set 3); Great Horned Owls, Ring-necked Pheasants, Ospreys, Swallows, Chickadees (Set 4); Roadrunner, Brown Thrashers, Blue Jays, Pelicans, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (Set 5); Quail, Ruffed Grouse, Barn Owls, Peregrine Falcon, Greater Flamingo (Set 6); Rough-legged Hawk, Bluebird, Purple Martin, Nene, White Ibis (Set 7); House Wren, Marsh Hawk, California Quail, Belted Kingfisher, Mockingbird (Set 8); Sparrow Hawk, Black-necked Stilt, Baltimore Oriole, Yellow-Shafted Flicker, Wild Turkey (Set 9); Cedar Waxwing, Wood Duck, Great Blue Heron, Elf Owl, White-breasted Nuthatch (Set 10).

We will accept bids for individual medals, but will give preference to bids for the entire group of ten sets and to bids for complete sets of five, as described above. All bids must be received at the GGAS office, in writing, no later than 5:00 p.m., October 31, 1993. The minimum bids are as

follows: Individual medal \$50.00, Set of five (as described above) \$225; All ten sets \$2,000. We reserve the right to reject any bid.

Please call the office to make an appointment to see the medals. This is a rare offer of the bird art of Gilroy Roberts, a wonderful gift for yourself, a family member or friend, and a great gift for GGAS.

IS YOUR GULL GETTING TO YOU ANNOYINGLY LATE? HELP US SOLVE THE PROBLEM

Over the last year we have had many complaints from our members about the lateness of the delivery of *The GULL*, especially in San Francisco.

We have kept track of this and have found that in most months *The GULL* arrives in San Francisco a full week later than in the East Bay. For example, the September *GULL* was received by many people in the East Bay on August 18. I received my San Francisco *GULL* on August 25.

While *The GULL* is mailed third class, it still should not take a full week to cross the Bay Bridge. We have phoned and written complaints to the Post Office but without much result.

We believe the problem rests in the San Francisco side of the Post Office. We urge all of you to call your local San Francisco Post Office—the one that delivers to you—and complain about the slow delivery. Thanks.

NEWS FROM OUR RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch (415) 868-9244
Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970
Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education
under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin
and Sequoia Audubon Societies
Gary Holloway, President
**GOLDEN GATE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE AUDUBON
CANYON RANCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
Steven Margolin, *ex officio* Dan Murphy
Nicki Spillane Bruce Walker

ACR Research

Among more than 30 research projects currently sponsored by ACR is the ongoing Tomales Bay Shorebird Count. It's just one of the many ways our 700 volunteers make ACR such a successful organization. What I particularly like about the shorebird count is that it is one of two research projects in which I get a chance to lend a hand.

You may not think counting is much of a challenge—one, two, three.... Well that I can do, but when you get up around 3000 shorebirds it gets just a bit harder. Terry Nordbye and I stood on a bluff overlooking the bivalve area of Tomales Bay. The late August day was pleasant enough. The light was good and wind wasn't a problem. Below on the mud flats were a couple of flocks of sandpipers which were close enough to count by species. We both managed to do that, and found there were between 3 and 4 Least Sandpipers per 100 Westerns. Then we scanned a bit farther out. Here and there and everywhere, among the clumps of broken mud and along the channels bringing in the morning's tide, were thousands of peeps. We had to count fast because invariably when we got about halfway through, they would all fly in one of those amazing flocks which turns simultaneously.

We were supposed to watch for movement into and out of our area, but birds just seemed to materialize. Each time we counted there seemed to be

more birds, but we didn't see any flying from outside our area. Most surely, they came in low, just over the berm and then blended with the flock on the ever shrinking mud flats. A flock of about 30 Red-necked Phalaropes appeared from nowhere. On counts like this you don't worry about identifying each bird to species. The flock remained so far from our vantage point that identification to species would certainly have been stretching the limits of factual observation. Under such circumstances it becomes more significant to count total numbers, then get a ratio. In just over an hour we were able to cover our area and accomplish our goals.

Back at Cypress Grove, John Kelly, ACR resident biologist, had his counting program on the computers, his jars of beans on the table and slides of massive flocks of birds on the screen. I watched a computer program which presented a bunch of dots on the screen. Just like in the field you count by tens, fifties, hundreds or whatever. However, with the program you learn how close you came to the exact number. Ok, so my estimating skills are far exceeded by counting skills.

John has some nice little jars of beans. Each has from about 30 to 500 beans. Empty them on a table and try to estimate the number in a minute or so. After all, that's all the time you're likely to get in the field. No matter what your accountant says, it's more fun counting birds than beans.

The slides are even worse since the birds seem to blend together and you get even less time to see them—flying by you know. Don't get discouraged, nobody gets it right except for John who has taken the time to count each bird on each slide. Like everything else, you feel great when you're really close and you get to experience real silence when

you're so far off you wonder if you can estimate the number of fingers on your left hand correctly. Oh well, if practice makes perfect, I have to get in a little more practice. I can hardly wait for all those Christmas Bird Counts coming up in December.

The margin of error is pretty consistent, so we do get a reasonably good idea of shorebird use and movement within Tomales Bay. Nobody argues the precise count of huge flocks, but the information gained is significant. It enables ACR biologists to better understand the significance of Tomales Bay in the Pacific flyway.

It's too late to join the shorebird count this year, but another is scheduled for the spring and of course the waterbird counts are coming up this winter. They're even more fun because you get to count huge flocks of birds while bobbing up and down in a small boat. Participation in all our research activities is somewhat limited, but if you contact one of our ranch biologists you may learn about one or two projects you would enjoy.

Work Days and Free Lunches

We need your help more than ever for Ranch maintenance. Current economic conditions are forcing ACR into a period of austerity. Needless to say, some maintenance projects have already been deferred. So come on out to prune, plant, mend and patch so our preserves will be ready for winter. We have two scheduled workdays, both are free and you even get a FREE LUNCH. Pre-registration is required, so please call us at (415) 868-9244.

The two weekends are: Saturday, October 16, at the Cypress Grove Preserve; and Saturday, November 6 at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve.

Fall Seminars

Please register in advance for all

seminars and workdays by calling (415) 868-9244.

Saturday, October 9. "Under the Heronry with Ray Peterson" at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve (free). We'd rather not say what's under the heronry, you'll have to see for yourself.

Saturday and Sunday, October 30-31. "Bats, Toads and Autumn Tricks" at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve with John Kipping and Ray Peterson. (\$90 per family of 4) Make Halloween a memorable treat for you and your entire family by being part of the new Halloween tradition at ACR. The highlight of this special family weekend will be the launching of the lighted Jack-o-lanterns on the lagoon.

Saturday, October 30. "The Way They Lived: Native American Lifestyles" at Bouverie Audubon Preserve with Foley Benson and John Petersen. (\$30) Discover how people native to the Valley of the Moon lived on the land for thousands of years, yet left it seemingly untouched.

Saturday or Sunday, November 6 or 7. "Keeping a Nature Journal" at the Bouverie Preserve with Mark Baldwin of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History (\$30). Learn to sharpen your field skills and record your observations in a journal in this very special one day seminar.

Saturday, November 20. "Monarchs!" at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve with Ray Peterson. (\$30). Ray will tell you all the secrets of the Monarch Butterflies and their migration except just how they manage to return to wintering areas several generations after their ancestors migrated the previous spring.

Bouverie Preserve Guided Nature Walks

Saturday, Oct. 23, Nov. 13 and Dec. 11; 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Enjoy the rich beauty of the Bouverie Audubon

Preserve on one of these free guided nature walks. Reservations are taken as early as the beginning of the month preceding the walk of your choice. Call (707) 938-4554 to reserve your place.

Conservation Note

Your letters in support of legislation to expand the Point Reyes National Seashore, or the Tomales Bay Protection Act are needed. As of this writing the bill has not yet been introduced in the House or the Senate, so there is not yet a bill number or an official title. The bill's sponsors are Rep. Lynn Woolsey and Sen. Barbara Boxer. It will enable

the Point Reyes National Seashore to acquire development easements on the Tomales Bay watershed, thus protecting one of California's most pristine estuaries. The goal is to assure the watershed east of Tomales Bay remains open space and agricultural. The legislation would block subdivisions, golf courses and such while preserving agricultural use. This is a far more cost effective plan than purchasing the land, yet it will provide the environmental protection necessary to preserve Tomales Bay.

—DAN MURPHY

GIFTS and BEQUESTS

FOR GGAS

In Memory Of
Hilda Brant

Gift of

June F. Browne
Amy S. Morgan
Virginia Sherwood
Sun Microsystems matching gift
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FOR PAPAGENO PROJECT

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Rita Jennings
Ms. Alberta C. Lloyd
I. Von Der Hude

FOR AUDUBON ADVENTURES

In Memory Of
Katy Pigford

U.C. Faculty Wives

FOR RARE BIRD ALERT

C.A. Peddle

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT
(510) 528-0288 Update: (510) 524-5592



THE GULL

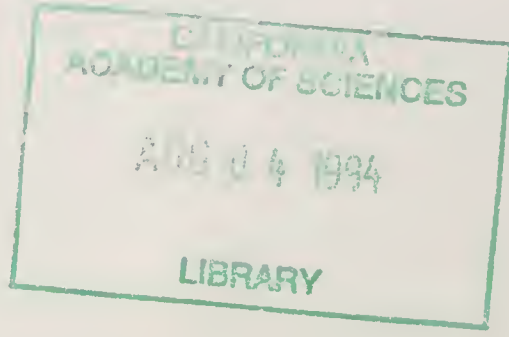
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Office: (510) 843-2222
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RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The GULL*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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